



**HEAD START PROGRAM
PY 2014-2015**

SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT



HIGH FLYING EXPECTATIONS



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Introduction

Continuous quality improvement is the foundation of excellent Head Start programs. It is the goal of Lorain County Community Action Agency Head Start to not only meet, but exceed Program Performance Standards, moving toward program excellence in serving the children and families of Lorain County.

Head Start Performance Standards state that at least once each program year, Head Start agencies must conduct a Self Assessment of their effectiveness and progress in meeting program goals and objectives and in implementing Federal regulations (1304.51(i)(1)). Programs must also incorporate child outcome data into their Self Assessment process (ACYF-IM-00-18).

The goals and objectives of Early/Head Start are as follows:

- I. To enhance children's growth and development
- II. To strengthen families as the primary nurturers of their children, and to support them as advocates for their children with regards to school readiness. LCCAA has established school readiness goals to ensure that Head Start children transition into Kindergarten "ready to learn" (see attached goals).
- III. To provide children with educational, health, and nutritional services:
- IV. To link children and families to needed community services.
- V. To ensure well managed programs that involves parents in decision-making.

LCCAA integrates Self Assessment into a cycle of continuous planning, utilizing a four-step system approach that includes:

- Stage One: Preparing
- Stage Two: Collecting and Synthesizing
- Stage Three: Interpreting
- Stage Four: Strengthening

Data analysis gives important information utilized in program planning, including the grant application cycle. The results and benefits expected include:

- Obtaining objectives, reliable information about our program services and systems
- Promoting an atmosphere of shared understanding of Head Start goals and objectives with governing bodies, program stakeholders, and community partners.
- Integration of multiple data sources.
- Thorough analysis of program data.
- Effective Program Quality Improvement Plans.
- Meaningful Training and Technical Assistance Plans.

Preparing Our Self Assessment

Lorain County Community Action Agency uses the Self Assessment process as an opportunity to provide cross-service area training to Head Start Management Team members. Head Start Management Team members provide leadership to each service area. The guidebook, Head Start Self Assessment, Community agencies, OMB circular was utilized in conjunction with the HHS current Monitoring Protocol instrument to guide this process. Data mining and evidence gathering included utilizing the methodologies listed below in a standardized process linked to compliance areas:

- Interview Guides
- Observation Guides
- Document Review Guides
- Checklists

Raw data was collected by team leaders and organized. Head Start Management Team members then analyzed the presented data to address: *Areas of Strength*, *Areas of Concern*, and *Areas of Improvement*. A final report is compiled from this information. It includes a summary of these results and makes determination regarding opportunities for program quality improvement. This may take place in the form of QI Plans for Areas of Concern, Program Area Action Plans for Areas of Improvement, and the preparation of the annual Training and Technical Assistance Plan. It is important that data is analyzed to determine whether events occur in isolation, or if they are a part of a larger trend of system implementation issues.



**LCCAA Head Start
Grant Application Timeline
FY 2014-2015**

Task	Person(s) Responsible	Completion Date
Self Assessment Orientation/Team Mtg.	Head Start Director / Head Start Mgmt. Team	November 14, 2014
Shared Governance Meeting	Head Start Director	November 18, 2014
School Readiness/Child Outcomes Qtr. 1	Education/Disability Specialist FHCS Specialist	December 7, 2014
Self Assessment Team Report	HSMT	January 09, 2015
Self Assessment Report to H.S. Director	HSMT	January 26, 2015
Self Assessment Cumulative Report	Head Start Director	February 19, 2015
Shared Governance Meeting	Board of Directors/Policy Council/ HSMT	February 19, 2015
Program Planning-	HSMT/STG Support	TBD
School Readiness/Child Outcomes Qtr. 2	Education/Disability Specialist FHCS Specialist	March 6, 2015
Service Area Plans - updates	HSMT	March 6, 2015
Program Approach (Strategic Planning)	Head Start Director w/HSMT	March 6, 2015
Program Accomplishments	Head Start Management Team	March 6, 2015
Training Plan and Assessment	HSMT	March 16, 2015
Budget	Finance Director/Head Start Director	March 13, 2015
Budget Justification	Finance Director/Head Start Director	March 13, 2015
GABI	Finance Director, Head Start Director Fiscal/Systems Specialist, and Administrative Support.	March 23, 2015
Review Full Grant Application	Head Start Director/Executive Director	April 1-18, 2015
Policy Council Meeting ~ Approval	Policy Council	April 15, 2015
Board Of Directors Meeting ~ Approval	Board of Directors	April 22, 2015
Electronic Submission to ACF, Office of Head Start	Head Start Administrative/Fiscal Specialist	April 29, 2015



**LCCAA HEAD START
SELF ASSESSMENT TEAM ROSTER**

Service Area	Team Leader(s)	Team Members
Child Development & Education	Maria Vasquez Ashley Jones Abe Beltran	Rhonda Brown Adam Gill – LCCAA Technology Celeste Brias – Elyria Public Library Carla Rodriguez – LCCAA Communications Director Holly Schnell – Kindercare Asst. Director LaShaunda Brawne – Policy Council Parent
Child Health & Safety	Vicki Bender Samantha Testa Milton Card	Nancy Sabbath – LCCAA Board Member (ECE) Troy Hill – Elyria City Schools
ERSEA	Judie Emerine Tracy Hough Barb Williams	Amber Kitchen – Policy Council Volinda Grisom – LCCAA Parent
Fiscal Integrity	Stefanie Drew Akeea Hodges	Jackie Boehnlein – CEO of LCCAA Mel Mendez – Executive Assistant Kristen Hopkins – Head Start Parent Rev. Calvin Curry – LCCAA Board Member Brenda Sharp – EHS Caregiver Barb Davis – One Main Financial – Branch Manager
Management Systems	Sharon Henry Rose Mason	Virginia Beckman – Director of Genesis House Melissa Stefano – Director of Children and Family First Council Elaine Betting – Lorain Public Library Kathy Carpenter – Girl Scouts of America
Program Governance	Rebecca Rodriguez Latoya Alexander Kalessa Edgeron	Frank Prihoda – CSBG Director (LCCAA) Beth Merrell



INTERPRETING THE INFORMATION

CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

STRENGTHS

- Strong tracking systems are in place to record and develop information of children and families (i.e., Genesis Earth and GOLD assessment).
- Strong system in place concerning dietary planning, nutrition information and menu development.
- Partnership with Health Department providing onsite services at Elyria location.
- Strong system concerning mental health consultation and building relationships with families, ensuring screenings and providing resources.
- Strong referral process in place and collaboration with school districts to ensure children with disabilities are served.
- Utilizes scientifically researched based curriculum (*Teaching Strategies – Creative Curriculum*)
- Strong school readiness goals are established based on the new Ohio Early Learning Development standards and the Head Start Early Childhood Development Framework.
- The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is utilized by 4 staff reliable assessors.
- Provides the required two home visits and in addition schedules two parent conferences.
- Strong transition program in place, (i.e., *Traveling to Kindergarten* and transition packets).
- Works closely with local Children and Family First Council to develop county-wide Inter Agency Agreements.
- Program enhancements (i.e., Tae Kwon Do and Viva Spanish) give additional opportunities for children in the area of: *Physical, Social Emotional and Dual Language Learning (DLL)*.
- An *English Language Learning (ELL)* class supports children and families whose first language is Spanish.
- Strong Parent communications through: Bi-weekly letters, newsletters, parent meetings, and agency website.
- Strong Parent Engagement practices: Encourages program volunteering, leadership on policy council, parent/child activities (i.e., wild About Learning).

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

- Review hiring practices to ensure credentialed personal per the Head Start Act (2007).

AREA OF CONCERN

- None

ENVIRONMENTAL CHILD HEALTH & SAFETY

STRENGTHS

- Staff are trained and well prepared for emergencies.
- Strong community partnerships with: Prevent Blindness Ohio, Medtox, Case Western Reserve University Lorain County Health Dentistry, and Ohio Business College.
- Strong training program for staff concerning health and safety.
- Strong reporting system: monthly staff meetings and reporting, quarterly reporting, annual report to the community.
- Emergency preparedness plans for all sites.
- Safety committee meetings (quarterly).
- Daily outdoor and playground checks
- ECKERS and CLASS tool used for classroom environment.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

- Recruit more parents for safety committee.

AREA OF CONCERN

- None

ERSEA

STRENGTHS

- Revise selection criteria form that ensures those with the highest needs are enrolled.
- 97 children's files were reviewed and in good order with audit trail and all documentation present.
- Data system (Genesis Earth) tracks enrollment, attendance, screenings and all family information.
- Strong recruitment strategies (i.e., community events, billboards, door to door, newspaper ad, child find, Parent and Board advocacy).
- Strong community partners and collaboration.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

- Child attendance.

AREA OF CONCERN

- Under enrollment.
- Under enrollment for the 10% requirement for children with disabilities.

FISCAL INTEGRITY

STRENGTHS

- Payroll is timely due to a web based system that identifies which staff timesheets have not been approved by supervisors.
- Timesheets and supporting documents are reviewed and approved by direct supervisors.
- Head Start and early Head start allocations are identified by staff and actual activity.
- Transactions are processed by designated employees identified by the program and agency.
- IRS Statements, unemployment fees, and taxes are current.
- Insurance documents are on file for programming, staff, buildings, and vehicles.
- Policies and procedures are documented for purchase order and direct payment requests and validated by key staff members.
- A review of invoices showed that appropriate documentation and signatures existed prior to purchases.
- In-kind values are fair market rates or based on actual expenditures.
- Monthly summaries reflect type and value of donations.
- Reports indicate that financial updates have been submitted to the Office of Head Start.
- Administrative costs do not exceed 15% of the total grant.
- The review of documents indicate the agency is in compliance with recent state and local audits.
- There are procedures and oversight of credit card usage.
- Positions are designed to meet the needs of the program and costs.
- Although there has been three Fiscal Directors in less than a year, there has been multiple training opportunities for new staff.
- Monthly budgets are shared with the Head Start Management Team, Policy Council and Board of Trustees.
- December through January payables showed that all invoices were current.
- All fiscal staff meets or exceeds the minimum qualifications for their positions.

AREA OF IMPROVEMENT

- Due to new HR staff, ongoing communication is needed between the departments to ensure that there are no gaps in payroll, unemployment, and fiscally related matters.
- A late CACFP report resulted in a submission for funds waiver and a review of the reporting and submission process.

AREA OF CONCERN

- None

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

STRENGTHS

- Strong system in place for secured personnel files and information.
- Increased electronic use for record keeping and storage of information and maintained paper/hard copy files.
- Strong communication systems for staff, families, and community, (i.e., regular staff meetings, email, trainings, lobby monitors, newsletter, community connection, annual report.
- Monthly reports generated for Policy Council and Board members.
- System for staff orientation and training.
- The program has clearly defined policies and procedures, an organizational chart, and written job descriptions to establish program structure.

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

- Improve organization of staff files.
- Keep evaluations current.

AREA OF CONCERN

- None

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

STRENGTHS

- Exceeding requirement, Policy Council comprised of 78% parents and 2 community representatives.
- Shared governance meetings at least twice through program year.
- Strong bylaws in place for both governing bodies.
- Monthly reporting to both governing bodies (i.e., financial, human resources, and program reports).
- LCCAA governing bodies have a strong commitment to the program and work diligently to ensure program compliance.
- Strong opportunities for parent input or feedback (i.e., volunteering, parent meetings, daily one on one with staff).

IMPROVEMENT NEEDED

- Strengthen parent representation from collaborative partners on policy council.

CONCERNS

- None